

City Council of the City of New Castle
Regular City Council Meeting
Town Hall, 201 Delaware Street, New Castle
Tuesday, April 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Call to order: 7 p.m.

Roll Call:

Councilperson Megginson
Councilperson Cochran - absent
Council President Ratchford
Councilperson Petty
Councilperson Vannucci

Also present:

William Barthel, City Administrator
Donald Reese, Mayor
Janet Carlin, City Treasurer
Daniel Losco, City Solicitor
Daniel Tjaden, Police Chief

The President thanked everyone for voting and for the vote of confidence to continue as the City Council President. The elected candidates were congratulated and the other candidates were thanked for their efforts and participation in the process.

Approval of Minutes by Date: 2/18/2015 Public Hearing; 2/18/2015 Special Meeting;
3/10/2015 Regular Meeting

Councilperson Petty motioned and Councilperson Vannucci seconded approval of the minutes without changes. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Carlin reported on the balances of the city's accounts as of March 31, 2015. The total cash on hand in all accounts is \$2,618,884.01.

Councilperson Vannucci motioned and Councilperson Petty seconded approval of the minutes without changes. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Staff Reports

Chief Tjaden reported:

- Police have started issuing warnings for vehicles parked against traffic.
- Two active drug investigations are underway.
- An arrest has been made for unlawful sexual conduct.
- Cooper, a single-purpose drug dog was introduced. The dog and handler, Corporal Paul Allston are now in training. Paul has to learn Dutch, Cooper's command language. They demonstrated some commands.
- TAPS (technical analytical policing system) should be operating soon and provide analysis of all police calls by geography, day and time for more targeted patrolling.

Councilperson Megginson motioned to accept the staff reports as submitted and Councilperson seconded Petty. The council unanimously accepted the reports.

Resident Bungy asked the Chief if the truck problem on Washington Street is being addressed. The Chief replied that after review, it was determined that they can't stop the truck traffic.

Council Communications

Councilperson Vannucci thanked everyone for coming out to vote and for the support for his re-election.

Business from the Floor (concerning agenda items only)

None

Business from the Mayor

- The swearing-in of the elected officials will be on Wednesday, April 22nd at the Courthouse at 7 pm. The public is invited to attend.
- Arbor Day is coming up and plans are underway for plantings.
- Separation Day will start being advertised soon with posters and mailers.

Mayor and Council Proclamation to Recognize Coach Bob "T" Tattersall Being Named as a 2015 Inductee to the Delaware Sports Hall of Fame.

President Ratchford read and presented a proclamation from the Mayor and City Council to recognize the induction of Coach Bob "T" Tattersall to the Delaware Sports Hall of Fame.

Old Business

Vote on Ordinance 502, an Ordinance to amend Chapter 166, Section 166-6 A (5) (c) relating to Permissible Noise Levels in Industrial Districts

Council President Ratchford reviewed the approval process of the previous reading, the public hearing and posting of Ordinance 502 on the City website and stated that the Ordinance does not need to be read again.

The Motion to approve Ordinance 502 was made by Councilperson Megginson and seconded by Councilperson Vannucci.

Ordinance 502 passed unanimously.

Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2015-15, a Resolution to approve disposing of city surplus property.

The following vehicles are from the Military Law Enforcement Surplus Program L.E.S.O., have been in the City's possession for one year and are eligible for disposal:

1971 D-7 Caterpillar Bull Dozer S/N - 61G00891

1971 D-7 Caterpillar Bull Dozer S/N - 61G307

The Motion to consider Resolution No. 2015-15 was made by Councilperson Petty and seconded by Councilperson Megginson.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2015-15 passed unanimously.

Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2015-11, a Resolution to Nominate Tree Advisory Commission Members.

The Motion to consider Resolution No. 2015-11 was made by Councilperson Petty and seconded by Councilperson Vannucci.

President Ratchford read the resolution. Nominees to the Tree Advisory Commission are: John Antonio, Sam Dunkin, and Toby Hagerott nominated by City Council and Ron Vukelich and Dave Robinson nominated by the Mayor.

Councilperson Megginson asked if it is too late to add a nomination. The President stated that a nomination will be accepted. Councilperson Megginson nominated Bill Boyle stating his qualifications as an owner of a tree farm and knowledge of trimming trees. He asked about the qualifications of the other nominees.

John Antonio owns a landscaping business. Sam Dunkin's qualifications are unknown. Toby Hagerott has related degrees in landscape design and sustainability and owns and operates a farm. He previously resided in the City and while he isn't a current resident, residency isn't a requirement to serve on the Tree Commission. Ron Vukelich is interested in the topic and Dave Robinson is a woodworker very familiar with various types of wood.

The vote was completed by candidate:

For William Boyle: Councilpersons Megginson and Vannucci

For John Antonio: President Ratchford and Councilpersons Petty and Vannucci

For Sam Dunkin: Councilperson Ratchford

For Toby Hagerott: President Ratchford and Councilperson Petty

For Ron Vukelich: Council President Ratchford

For Dave Robinson: President Ratchford and Councilpersons Petty and Vannucci

City Solicitor Losco stated that nominees must receive a quorum of votes, so Mr. Antonio and Mr. Robinson are approved.

Mr. Vannucci asked to table the vote because he is unfamiliar with most of the candidates.

The President reminded everyone that this item was on March's and April's Meeting Agendas and Council was asked for nominees. Council members were asked to review the slate of candidates to be prepared to vote at the next meeting.

Resolution No. 2015-11 will be added to next month's agenda.

New Business

Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2015-16, a Resolution to appoint Gail Seitz to replace David Bird on the Wilmington Area Planning Council WILMAPCO Public Advisory Committee.

The Motion to consider Resolution No. 2015-16 was made by Councilperson Petty and seconded by Councilperson Vannucci.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2015-16 passed unanimously.

President Ratchford thanked David Bird for his service and Gail Seitz for her willingness to represent the City at WILMAPCO.

Discussion regarding A Day in Old New Castle Celebration; Council will consider parking restrictions.

A Committee Member, Cindy Snyder provided information about the plans for a Day in Old New Castle. The theme is the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War. The tour will include 18 houses and 26 gardens. The Committee partnered with Mid-Atlantic food and wine festival to provide premium tours with chefs and wine makers to provide a progressive lunch. An encampment of Union and Rebel soldiers will be on the Green. Music performances are scheduled throughout the day. Merchants will have special offerings appropriate to the theme. In addition to the restaurants, Del Tech will also be a food provider. There will be a vintage 1860's baseball game.

The Committee asked to close The Strand, Delaware Street from 3rd Street to the wharf, 2nd Street between The Strand and Harmony Street, and East 3rd street between Delaware and Harmony. Handicapped parking will be provided on Delaware Street between 3rd and 4th Streets.

Councilperson Megginson questioned the ability to access the bank from West 3rd Street. Council asked that people going to the bank be accommodated.

Discussion regarding Community Concerts; Council will discuss City Sponsorship.

Terry Gormley spoke on behalf of Community Concerts advising Council that the event has been run and funded by Jim Travers. The total cost is estimated to be between \$8,000 and \$10,000. The Trustees have agreed to contribute \$4,000 and \$1,000 has been raised from individual contributions. Art currently on display in The Weekly's Office will be sold to benefit the concert. The bands have been asked to charge less. If the full amount isn't raised, the concert schedule will be shortened.

Councilperson Vannucci suggested sending letters to request funding support to St. Anthony's and St. Gabe's Clubs.

The City Administrator researched the City's ability to provide insurance and advised that provided contracts are signed by the performers there will be no additional cost.

President Ratchford advised that the City will continue to provide in-kind services such as a stage, police, and trash removal.

Comments from the floor.

Binnie Beale of 26 The Strand spoke about the lack of signage, bags and trash containers for dog waste. The issue has been brought to the attention of the Trustees and Council previously. He asked Council to please reconsider due to the health hazard.

Dan Knotts, the City Council appointee to the Municipal Services Commission, addressed attachments to the City water tower. Mr. Knotts acknowledges his obligation to represent City Council but believes he has a bigger obligation to the citizens. He understands that companies are offering money to the City in exchange for having antenna on the water tower. Mr. Knotts questioned what happens to the antenna if the company that owns the antenna goes bankrupt. He reported that Artesian Water Company no longer allows attachments to their towers. The MSC voted to decline the request to install antenna, but it's not a dead issue. Mr. Knotts asked Council to take into consideration the local residents near the water tower and asks that they be informed.

Councilperson Vannucci stated that five homes closest to the water tower are owned by the St. Anthony's Club. As the Vice President of the Club, Councilperson Vannucci can speak for St. Anthony's and knows the local residents. The occupants of those homes have no problem with the antenna.

Councilperson Megginson asked that the MSC consider increasing their donation by \$50,000.

Mr. Knotts stated that he understands the City's need to raise revenue. The choices are to raise taxes or ask the MSC for additional funds. The MSC must adjust rates to the residents for water and electric to get more money to give to the City. Since the City taxes are deductible, he believes that higher taxes are a better financial option.

The motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Megginson, seconded by Councilperson Vannucci and passed unanimously. Council adjourned at 7:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Wurtzel
Clerk of the City of New Castle